Network Working Group
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Using ODA for Translating Multimedia Information

1. Status of this Memo

The purpose of this RFC is to inform implementors of multimedia systems about our experiences using ISO 8613: Office Document Architecture (ODA). Because ODA is being proposed as an encoding format for use in multimedia mail and file exchange, implementors wishing to use ODA in an open systems environment may profit from our experiences. This memo provides information for the Internet community. It does not specify any standard. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

2. Overview

ODA is a recently approved ISO (8613) and CCITT (T.410) standard for representing documents containing multifont text, raster images and geometric graphics. This encoding has been specified for use in a number of related standards, such as X.400.

However, ODA is a very abstract standard, defining entities such as "composite logical object classes" and not common entities, such as "paragraphs". Therefore, effective use of ODA as an interchange medium requires the definition of a document application profile (dap) that defines some common entities and a map between ODA entities defined in the dap and entities used in the interchanged systems.

3. EXPRES Experiences

The National Science Foundation funded the EXPRES project, which consisted of groups at Carnegie Mellon University (Information Technology Center) and the University of Michigan (Center for Information Technology Integration). These two groups collaborated with groups at McDonnell-Douglas Aerospace Information Systems, NIST, and Interleaf. Together, the five groups investigated the use of ODA as an interchange medium for submitting research proposals by electronic mail to the National Science Foundation.

Part of the investigations yielded strategies for using ODA. We based our strategies on the NIST dap and the features provided by the Andrew, Diamond, and Interleaf systems. Our experiences been documented and published in a book [1]. The discussion may be

valuable for others who wish to use ODA as an interchange medium.

4. Disclaimer

The information provided in [1] is the opinion only of the authors and does not represent the opinions or policies of Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Michigan, McDonnell-Douglas Aerospace Information Systems, NIST, Interleaf, or the National Science Foundation.

5. References

[1] Jonathan Rosenberg, Mark Sherman, Ann Marks & Jaap Akkerhuis, "Multi-media Document Translation: ODA and the EXPRES Project", Springer-Verlag (New York), 1991, ISBN 0-387-97397-4, 3-540-97397-4.

Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

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